

This is an official DHEC Health Update

Distributed via the South Carolina Health Alert Network
October 6, 2008, 1:00 PM

Get Smart: Know When Antibiotics Work Campaign “Because sometimes the best medicine is no medicine.”

October 6-10, 2008

This Health Update is to provide information about the CDC “Get Smart Know When Antibiotics Work” campaign <http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/community/index.htm>, and the DHEC “Careful Antibiotic Use (CAUse)” campaign <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/sccause>. DHEC will be participating in “Get Smart: Know When Antibiotics Work” the week of October 6-10, 2008. Both websites provide information for healthcare providers and community events. Also, public education events may be scheduled in your community even after this week. The activities are designed to raise awareness related to antibiotic resistance and will target both consumers and healthcare providers. Specific healthcare provider information can be found on the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/community/healthcare-provider.htm.

The primary statewide project planned for this week is the distribution of a children’s book entitled “The Little Elephant with the Big Earache” (<http://www.hippocraticpress.com>) to every state library branch in South Carolina. The information presented in the book is consistent with the *American Academy of Family Physicians*, *American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery* and “*American Academy of Pediatrics Subcommittee on Otitis Media with Effusion Clinical Practice Guidelines*” for “watchful waiting” for Otitis Media with effusion. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/113/5/1412#SEC7>. The book also contains a parent handbook that outlines appropriate palliative measures to comfort their child, discourages demanding antibiotics when their healthcare provider deems them unnecessary, and gives guidelines on when to call the physician. Careful antibiotic use pamphlets and posters will also be available at the public libraries.

**PATIENT EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS RELATED TO ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE AND THE
“GET SMART” CAMPAIGN CAN BE ORDERED ON LINE THROUGH THE CDC
<http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/community/index.htm> AND THE CAREFUL ANTIBIOTIC
USE CAMPAIGN THROUGH SCDHEC <http://www.scdhec.gov/em/>.**

The campaign is targeted to parents and the general public with the long term goal of reducing the spread of antibiotic resistance in the community.

Objectives:

- Increase the knowledge of the general public and modify their attitudes and behaviors regarding appropriate antibiotic use and antibiotic resistance including:
 - Decrease demand for antibiotics for upper respiratory infections* among healthy adults and parents
 - Increase adherence to prescribed antibiotics for upper respiratory infections
- Decrease unnecessary prescribing of antibiotics for upper respiratory infections
- Decrease sharing and saving of previously prescribed antibiotics
- Increase adherence to healthy behaviors to prevent acquiring a upper respiratory infection

*Upper Respiratory Infections include: pharyngitis, bronchitis, otitis media, sinusitis, and the common cold

Key Messages:

- Antibiotics do not treat viral illnesses like colds and sore throat (except strep throat)
- Your body will fight viral illnesses that cause most upper respiratory infections
- You should only use antibiotics that are prescribed to you by a healthcare provider; always follow the instructions on the label and properly dispose of any leftover medication.
 - Do not share your antibiotics with anyone, not even a family member
- The inappropriate use of antibiotics may lead to unnecessary and sometimes dangerous side effects
- Each time people take antibiotics, they are more likely to carry resistant germs in their noses and throats. Common antibiotics cannot kill these resistant germs.
- Good hand hygiene is one of the best ways to keep from getting sick and spreading illnesses
- Immunizations can help protect you and your child

Action Items:

- Talk with your healthcare provider about the best treatment for your illness
- To feel better when you have an upper respiratory infection and antibiotics are not needed...
 - Increase fluid intake
 - Get plenty of rest
 - Use a cool mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion
 - Soothe throat with ice chips, sore throat spray, or lozenges (do not give lozenges to young children)
- Properly dispose leftover and expired antibiotics
- Clean your hands often (e.g., before meals and after touching pets)
- Keep you and your child current with recommended immunizations

DHEC Contact: Antibiotic Resistance Section, Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology at 803-898-0861